

Monday Oct 19 2015

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fact that the stones didn't give him a yes or no answer, to him means that he must create his own answer/destiny. It is symbolism.

20. Santiago decides to stop victimizing himself because it was his own mistake. He realizes that there is an importance to perspective, and if he keeps wallowing in his own misery he won't succeed in what he set out to do. Shifting his negative perspective to a positive one will keep him motivated.

21. The crystal merchant was tricked into believing the world's greatest lie because he took his 'beginner's luck' for granted, and thus ended up staying in the same spot he had been in forever. He did not seek to expand, or move, after the city of Tangier which he lives in grew faster than he did. He had success in the beginning (beginner's luck) but did not capitalize on it, and relocate from the inconvenient hill that he has been located at for 30 years. Now he cannot change because it's too late, and nobody visits the hill anymore. He is aware of the changes he needs/(ed) to make but has already given up.

22. After the merchant tells Santiago that he will not make enough money working his shop to get to Egypt, Santiago says that he will work until he can buy sheep. This shows that Santiago understands that in order to fulfill his Personal Legend (or to find the treasure) there will be many stops before he will get there. He must be opportunistic with his omens, and he knows that he can't slow down – the connection between the stones and this is relevant, as he realizes by getting sheep he can take his destiny into his own hands. There is a big shift in his character/perspective here as he is not hopeless as he was after being stolen from. The Alchemist

Comprehension questions #3

23. The fear of realizing one's dream explains the Merchant's failure to travel to Mecca through his miserly tendencies within his crystal shop. He eventually became so comfortable in his own routine that he lost touch with why he sought out to open it in the first place. The Merchant explains that in the beginning his goal was to save up money to get to Mecca, but ultimately, through much daydreaming, the fantasy of being there seemed much more enjoyable to him than actually going in the end. This is further validated near the time when Santiago is saying farewell, when the merchant says "But you know that I'm not going to go to Mecca. Just as you know that you're not going to buy your sheep." – (p.61)

24. One of the most obvious reasons we know that Santiago has learned about the importance of persistence is through the sheer amount of time that he has spent working in the crystal merchant's shop, eleven months. Throughout this time, Santiago is making money based on commissions, and in order to earn his money faster, he is patient, and he makes small improvements to the shop and eventually it flourishes. He is dedicated to the work because he does not lose touch with his Personal Legend, and even though he experienced misfortune (encounter with thief, being stranded in Africa), he keeps on moving forward. Especially by the end of the reading section, we know that Santiago is persistent as he reminds himself/realizes